United Nations A/65/PV.1

General Assembly
Sixty-fifth session

Official Records

1st plenary meeting
Tuesday, 14 September 2010, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Deiss (Switzerland)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Opening of the session by the President of the General Assembly

The President (*spoke in French*): I declare open the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

Item 2 of the provisional agenda

Minute of silent prayer or meditation

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with rule 62 of the rules of procedure, I invite representatives to stand and observe one minute of silent prayer or meditation.

The members of the General Assembly observed a minute of silent prayer or meditation.

Statement by the President

The President (spoke in French): The General Assembly is the pre-eminent forum for global debate. As we meet to begin the work of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly, the world is slowly recovering from the economic and financial crisis. This recent setback should not, however, discourage us in our struggle against the major calamities afflicting the world. On the contrary, the international community's response to the crisis has shown us that multilateralism is working.

Today, all populations affected by poverty or threatened by war, global warming or natural disasters have the right to expect that our discussions and our actions will relieve their suffering and their pain. All of us who comprise this General Assembly have an important instrument available to us to address the great issues of today. I am convinced of this. In fact, as the Charter tells us, the General Assembly is the pre-eminent forum for global debate. It must be the place for a convergence of efforts and of institutions called upon to establish and assume global governance. There is no subject of concern to man and our planet that could be irrelevant to our debates.

Too often, however, public opinion sees a United Nations with a General Assembly that is powerless, a talk shop with no real impact. I hope that the sixty-fifth session that is now beginning will show that we are able to make a difference. I hope that this session will meet the great expectations placed in us. We have an obligation to deliver results. The issues to be discussed are too serious for that obligation not to be our primary motivation, pushing us to move beyond our purely national interests and truly to work for the benefit of all.

In that connection, I would like to thank the President of the sixty-fourth session, His Excellency Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki, for his enlightened work at the head of our Assembly and for his personal commitment. I also commend and express my gratitude to our Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, for his tireless commitment in the service of

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our Organization, here in New York and around the world.

The session now beginning will have a heavy agenda. We shall have to focus our energies to make progress on many issues that are crucial for humanity. Three broad areas lie before us.

First, we must make sure that the Millennium Development Goals are achieved. In December 2009, the General Assembly decided to hold a High-level Plenary Meeting on the Millennium Development Goals. On Monday, many heads of State and Government are expected here in New York. This summit will certainly be one of the milestones of the United Nations year, and we do not have the right to fail. Despite the economic crisis, the Millennium Development Goals are within our reach. In particular, we must bridge the gaps in the fight against hunger, child mortality and maternal health. This is possible. Our work next week must result in a sincere commitment and a genuine plan of action to ensure that we reach the ambitious goal that the international community has set for itself.

Secondly, we must reinstate the United Nations and the General Assembly at the centre of global governance. The challenges we face today have acquired a global dimension and require global solutions. Our actions must enjoy broad legitimacy and be the result of inclusive processes. We must improve the mechanisms for information, consultation and cooperation between the United Nations and other actors and tools of global governance.

Reaffirming the central role of the United Nations in global governance — that is the issue that I would like to see the General Assembly explore further during the general debate. Indeed, this is the subject that I proposed as the special theme following consultations with many permanent representatives, various regional groups and the Secretary-General. We must advocate for a strong, inclusive and open United Nations. As we know, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and civil society make an essential contribution to our work.

However, we must also move forward decisively with internal reforms. Reform of the Security Council remains important. We are all aware of the need for such reform. I would like us to be able to make progress on this matter, but it is for the Member States to take decisions that enjoy broad support and make a convergence of views possible.

Other institutional issues at this session will be the review of the work of the Human Rights Council and the Peacebuilding Commission. Furthermore, we must continue efforts to revitalize the General Assembly. In that regard, I am counting on members to ensure that our debates begin on time and that we make the most effective use of the time available.

Thirdly, we must promote sustainable development. Climate change, vulnerability to natural disasters and threats to biodiversity are only some of the environmental challenges that affect all States and require a concerted effort from all countries. Environmental issues will figure prominently on our agenda, which includes the high-level meeting on biodiversity during the week of the summit on the Millennium Development Goals.

I believe that it is crucial to increase awareness of the need for economic structures that are more respectful of the environment and of future generations. In this context, the term "green economy" is frequently used. I am aware that some among us are concerned by the use of this term. The adjective and noun "green economy" have different meanings to different groups. Some fears are justified and must be taken into account. Let it be clear from the outset, however, that for me "green economy" does not mean new conditionality, but rather opportunity. It is an opportunity to ensure sustainable development for the benefit of our planet, ourselves, our children and our grandchildren. The world is changing, but the fundamental purposes and principles of the United Nations are timeless.

Our efforts in the three areas that I have just mentioned — poverty eradication, governance and sustainable development — will make essential contributions towards peace and security, international cooperation and friendship between peoples.

The Charter must remain our ultimate guide. Peace and security are our primary calling, and much work remains to be done. This includes all of the conflicts that still ravage our world to this day and cause distress and suffering to hundreds of thousands of men, women and children. It is international cooperation and friendship among peoples that will enable us to make progress in the areas of human rights, development, humanitarian aid, disarmament

and counter-terrorism. It is international cooperation and friendship among peoples that will also enable us to make progress in the areas of health and the environment. These are the values that will allow us to establish a genuine global partnership and to move forward in all areas of crucial importance for peace and security.

My vision is of a strong General Assembly, which should be the main forum for global debate. However, that will require us to learn how to listen to each other. I assure members that I will make myself available so that we can work together in harmony. My door is open. I offer my leadership so that progress can be made, but, above all, I would urge us all to overcome our selfishness and our rivalries for the benefit of humanity.

Item 135 of the provisional agenda

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/65/359)

The President *(spoke in French)*: I would like, in keeping with established practice, to invite the attention of the General Assembly to document A/65/350. It contains a letter from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly, in which he informs the Assembly that six Member States are in arrears in the payment of their financial contributions to the United Nations within the terms of Article 19 of the Charter.

I would like to remind delegations that, under Article 19 of the Charter,

> "A Member of the United Nations which is in arrears in the payment of its financial contributions to the Organization shall have no vote in the General Assembly if the amount of its arrears equals or exceeds the amount of the contributions due from it for the preceding two full years."

May I therefore take it that the General Assembly takes note of the information contained in document A/65/359?

It was so decided.

Items 7 and 134 of the provisional agenda

Organization of work, adoption of the agenda and allocation of items

Pattern of conferences

> **Letter dated 30 August 2010 from the Chair of the Committee on Conferences addressed to the President of the General Assembly (A/65/337)**

The President *(spoke in French)*: Members are aware that, pursuant to section I, paragraph 7, of resolution 40/243, no subsidiary organ of the General Assembly should be permitted to meet at United Nations Headquarters during the main part of a regular session of the Assembly, unless explicitly authorized by the Assembly.

On the strict understanding that meetings would have to be accommodated within available facilities and services, authorization is thus sought for the following subsidiary organs: the Committee on Relations with the Host Country, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, the Disarmament Commission, the Independent Audit Advisory Committee, the International Criminal Court Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute, and the Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to authorize those subsidiary organs of the Assembly to meet during the main part of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 3.30 p.m.